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GOVERNMENT-TO-GOVERNMENT CONSULTATION MEETING
Between the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and
Federally-Recognized Tribal Governments Regarding
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Proposal to
Delist the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem Population of
Grizzly Bears

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Taken at
BEST WESTERN RAMKOTA HOTEL
2111 N. Lacrosse Street
Rapid City, South Dakota
May 5, 2016

A P P E A R A N C E S

ANNA MUNOZ
(Assistant Regional Director for External Affairs)

NEDRA CHANDLER
(Facilitator)

MICHAEL THABAULT
(Assistant Regional Director for Ecological Services for
the Region in Denver, Colorado)

PAM KILLS IN WATER
(Rosebud Sioux Tribe)

SCOTT AIKIN
(National Native American Program Coordinator for the
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service)

MATT HOGAN
(Deputy Regional Director for the Fish & Wildlife Service
in the Mountain-Prairie Region)

BRIAN SOUNDING SIDES
(Northern Arapaho THPO Office)

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P R O C E E D I N G S

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(Opening prayer)

MS. NEDRA CHANDLER: So I want you to know a little bit about me. But this is not about me. It's about your conversation. So I'm going to proceed to the background. I am a mom of two kids. And I came to this field, as I said, about 26 years ago. And, again, I'm honored to get to serve. And my relationship to the Grizzly Bear delisting proposal, in this case I am all about your process here to have this government-to-government conversation, to have a sovereign conversation.

And -- but I did grow up in Grizzly Bear country. I grew up around Bozeman and spent three seasons in Glacier Park up on the Continental Divide. It's Baker, so I got to live with bears really closely for a couple -- three seasons in the '80s. So that's my relationship.

Do you mind going next, Brian?

MR. BRIAN SOUNDING SIDES: Okay.

Hello, everybody. My name is Brian Sounding Sides. I work for the Northern Arapaho THPO Office. I've been doing the work since 2009. I'm just basically here to observe and listen. I'm not the

1 boss, so, you know...

2 MS. NEDRA CHANDLER: Was there anything you
3 were hoping to bring back or communicate that --
4 just to get it on the agenda was what I was --

5 MR. BRIAN SOUNDING SIDES: No.

6 MS. NEDRA CHANDLER: Okay. Thanks for making
7 the trip.

8 MR. BRIAN SOUNDING SIDES: Thank you.

9 MS. ANNA MUNOZ: Hi. My name is Anna Munoz. I
10 work for the U.S Fish & Wildlife Service Regional
11 Office in Denver, Colorado. I'm the Assistant
12 Regional Director for External Affairs, and so under
13 my program we have the tribal program, which Ivy
14 Allen -- I don't know if either of you have worked
15 with Ivy in the past -- works for me, and she serves
16 as our Native American liaison for the regional
17 office.

18 And so I am here today, one, because this is an
19 issue that I've been working on since I arrived in
20 Denver in November, but also I have a greater
21 interest in, you know, understanding how we can
22 better engage and consult with our tribes within our
23 region. And so that's one of the things I'm going
24 to be thinking of a lot about today during this
25 meeting.

1 MR. SCOTT AIKIN: I'm Scott Aikin. I'm the
2 National Native American Program Coordinator for the
3 U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. I'm from northeast
4 Kansas, and the Grizzly Bear was not part of our
5 cultural discussion or understanding or
6 presentation, but certainly by virtue of the job
7 that I do for the Service, it's a very important
8 connection of what we do in terms of applying the
9 Endangered Species Act.

10 I should say some more. Happily married for 27
11 years, and I have four children.

12 MR. MATT HOGAN: Accentuate the "happily
13 married" part for the record.

14 MR. SCOTT AIKIN: That's all. Thank you.

15 MR. MATT HOGAN: My name is Matt Hogan. I'm
16 the Deputy Regional Director for the Fish & Wildlife
17 Service in the Mountain-Prairie Region.

18 And maybe for Brian and Pam, just a lot of
19 bureaucracy. You can kind of figure out how we all
20 fit in.

21 So the Mountain-Prairie Region encompasses
22 eight states, to include both Dakotas, Montana,
23 Wyoming, Colorado, Utah and then Kansas and
24 Nebraska. So we're the lead region for Grizzly
25 Bears. Even though we share Grizzly Bears with our

1 neighbors to the west out in Portland, we're the
2 lead region.

3 So, as I said, I'm the Deputy Regional
4 Director. So I've been, I won't say the lead policy
5 person because our director has been involved in it
6 as our regional director, but in terms of the kind
7 of day-in-and-day-out policy side of the Grizzly
8 Bear and Grizzly Bear delisting, I've been the lead
9 for the Fish & Wildlife Service. I report directly
10 to the RD, who reports directly to the Director. So
11 just so you get a hierarchy of how we kind of
12 interface all the way up through the boss.

13 I just want to say that, first, thanks for
14 making the drive over here from both of you.

15 You know, I think, as I said in Bozeman, and
16 I'll build on what Anna said, we really want to
17 figure out how to do -- to improve our ability to
18 communicate with tribes because I think we have a
19 lot of shared interests. We clearly have a shared
20 interest in the Grizzly Bear. We have a shared
21 interest in making sure the Grizzly Bear is around
22 for, as Scott said in his opening prayer, for not
23 just us but for our children and our children's
24 children and for many generations.

25 So I think we have a lot of shared interests,

1 not just in the Grizzly Bear, even though that's the
2 conversation today, but in a lot of things
3 associated with the natural world. And so I'm
4 looking forward to the conversation today.
5 Hopefully we can share some of our perspectives with
6 you and certainly continue to hear the tribal
7 perspective as we move forward with considering this
8 proposal.

9 So again thanks, Brian and Pam, for making the
10 trip. We appreciate it very much.

11 MS. PAM KILLS IN WATER: Good afternoon. My
12 name is Pam Kills In Water. I'm from the Rosebud
13 Sioux Tribe. I currently work for President Kindle.
14 Prior to that I was on Tribal Council. I'm here on
15 behalf of Mr. Kindle because his secretary opened up
16 the e-mail last minute, and that's why I'm here.

17 But like I was joking around with the guys
18 earlier, there was a word called "delist" on there
19 and we didn't know what that meant, and everybody
20 thought it was with Yellowstone and -- with
21 everything going on with Yellowstone, so...

22 MR. MICHEAL THABAULT: Well, I'm Michael
23 Thabault. I'm the Assistant Regional Director for
24 Ecological Services for the region in Denver.
25 Pretty much everything, endangered species that

1 happens in the region is under my program. I have a
2 number of offices across the region in all the
3 states. And so we basically look to put species on
4 the list to protect them, and we delist them to take
5 them off the list when they don't need protection
6 anymore and we develop recovery plans.

7 And I've been doing endangered species work for
8 almost my entire career in the Federal Government,
9 28-plus years. I have a lot of interaction with the
10 Plains Tribes, the Missouri River. I have many
11 conversations with many of the Sioux tribes that are
12 involved in the Missouri River issues and endangered
13 species associated with that.

14 And we've been -- we're really interested in
15 how we continue our natural heritage and our legacy
16 in how to work with our tribal members across the
17 region, better communicate and understand their
18 perspectives.

19 MR. MATT HOGAN: We originally had proposed to
20 delist what is called the Greater Yellowstone
21 Ecosystem Population of Grizzly Bears back in 2007.
22 And Mike will cover this in more detail. But at
23 that time and I think moving forward, so we -- that
24 decision was overturned in court, and so we did some
25 work. And, again, I don't want to steal Mike's

1 thunder. But at that point and then when we started
2 to contemplate a delisting again, we originally had
3 reached out just to the tribes that are immediately
4 in the ecosystem, which certainly includes the
5 Northern Arapaho, but we did not, I don't think,
6 reach out originally to the Sioux Nation and the
7 other tribes.

8 As we got deeper into this issue, we had heard
9 that there was interest beyond just the six tribes
10 that immediately interface with the bear now, and so
11 we expanded our effort to consult with tribes
12 outside of just the six that I originally mentioned.

13 So that's how we came to offer consultation to
14 the Rosebud Sioux and a lot of your neighbors.

15 In fact, it expands even beyond the Sioux
16 Nation and into some of the tribes to the south.

17 I don't think we had your tribe on the list
18 originally, Scott. Sorry.

19 MR. SCOTT AIKIN: No.

20 MR. MATT HOGAN: But he has to be here anyway
21 because he's a service employee.

22 So -- and I just lost my train of thought.

23 Oh, so to your question, though, and I think
24 Mike can handle this better than I, but at one point
25 Grizzly Bears did range into South Dakota. They

1 don't now, as you pointed out.

2 But I don't know if we have specific bone
3 samples maybe from --

4 MR. MICHAEL THABAULT: I don't think we have
5 any records in South Dakota but, you know, many of
6 the Plains tribes, in writing correspondence to us,
7 have expressed their knowledge and, that the bear
8 had a cultural and spiritual connection to them
9 historically through their ancestors. And so we did
10 cast a broader net, so to speak, to many of the
11 tribes that were within historical range and may
12 have that connection because of the expressed
13 interest.

14 MS. PAM KILLS IN WATER: Like for me, my age,
15 I'm 40, just for the record, I don't -- I guess me,
16 myself, I don't have anything in my family that says
17 anything about, you know, a bear, you know, but at
18 the same time in our religious, you know, stuff,
19 there is something about the bear in there,
20 especially when it comes to Pe Sla, the bear is a
21 part of the Pe Sla and the, you know, the knowledge
22 that goes on up there. So, you know, it's something
23 for me to learn.

24 But that was just kind of my personal thing
25 was, you know, why were we included in this and, you

1 know, what does "delisting" mean? And, like I said,
2 I looked it up and it says, "To take off a list."
3 And I was like, What list? Because I have no
4 history of, that this work has been going on.
5 Everything was so last minute for me. I just jumped
6 in my car and drove up here. So, I mean -- but
7 those are my questions -- I mean, those were my only
8 questions for that.

9 But -- and I'm sure that our tribe would
10 support, you know, if you guys, you know, feel that
11 you need to take them off the list. Because
12 eventually sometime down the road if killing goes on
13 more, they'll go back on the list again. And, I
14 mean, it's not like once you delist them they stay
15 off the list for the rest of --

16 MR. MICHAEL THABAULT: Always have the
17 opportunity to protect them again if they need it.

18 MS. PAM KILLS IN WATER: Yeah. See, and that's
19 why I'm saying I don't, I mean, I don't see a
20 problem with our tribe supporting whatever decision
21 you guys make. "You guys." No.

22 (Laughter)

23 MS. PAM KILLS IN WATER: Leave me out of it.

24 (Laughter)

25 MS. PAM KILLS IN WATER: No.

1 MR. SCOTT AIKIN: You want to do your
2 presentation?

3 MR. MICHAEL THABAULT: I can, if that would be
4 helpful. I can maybe just start from the beginning
5 a bit.

6 MR. MATT HOGAN: Can I ask one logistical
7 question? There's been a couple of mentions that
8 Brian needs to leave at a certain time to drive
9 home. Do we have -- so we'd originally scheduled
10 this to go until 3:30. We actually went late when
11 we were in Bozeman, and we're certainly prepared for
12 that. But if there's an interest in wrapping up
13 early, that might change our travel plans that we
14 probably need to start putting in motion. So do we
15 have a new set time we're looking to adjourn? Is
16 there a set time Brian needs to leave and Pam needs
17 to leave?

18 MS. NEDRA CHANDLER: That's a great question.
19 So just a little time check: It's ten after
20 12:00. What would be your preference?

21 MR. BRIAN SOUNDING SIDES: 3:30 is fine with
22 me. But, you know, if it gets done earlier, we're
23 good with that.

24 (Discussion off the record.)

25 MS. NEDRA CHANDLER: Pam still has a question

1 that's hanging here, and it's, you know --

2 MS. PAM KILLS IN WATER: My question was -- is:
3 What are you looking for from the tribes? Are you
4 looking for approval, disapproval? Are you looking
5 for support? Are you looking for -- I mean, what
6 exactly is it you're seeking out to the tribes for?

7 MS. NEDRA CHANDLER: And I'm moving back from
8 the table as the non-governmental type so that you
9 can have this conversation.

10 I'm tempted to say, Scott Aikin, you have a big
11 picture view of an answer to this question. Maybe
12 you could offer it, but --

13 MR. SCOTT AIKIN: From a national standpoint,
14 I'll just start painting with that brush. From a
15 national standpoint we have committed in our
16 National Native American Policy to work with the
17 regions in the programs to do more consistent and
18 deeper outreach on issues like this and that the
19 government to government that we all operate under
20 as federal agencies under the Executive Order 13175
21 that President Obama continues to promote, which we
22 have a responsibility to respond to appropriately,
23 that's part of this engagement, doing that outreach,
24 and in a meaningful way, not to just be cursory
25 about it and say, We've done these things and we're

1 through.

2 Inasmuch as that is stated, the input that we
3 receive from tribes is different than we receive
4 from the public in that it can extend beyond the
5 public comment period. So we have dates that you'll
6 see come up on this.

7 And for tribal input, we want to make clear
8 that what you take back is hopefully information
9 that we provide you, but also that we are clear on
10 what our responsibility is to do as the U.S. Fish &
11 Wildlife Service, which is to protect the species.
12 And in this case we're delisting because this
13 species is meeting the threshold that takes us to
14 discuss that with the other sovereigns, states,
15 tribes.

16 MS. PAM KILLS IN WATER: So with the delisting,
17 taking it off of the list, what -- now, again, I
18 don't know if my questions are -- how would I say
19 it? They're not -- I don't want to be saying I'm --
20 I'm here representing Mr. Kindle, but I do not know
21 what his thoughts or what the tribe's train of
22 thought is on this. But mine is with this
23 government to government with all the tribes, what
24 are we -- I know you're including us in stuff, but
25 what is it exactly that we are -- we are involved

1 in? I mean, do we actually have that say? I mean,
2 that's my thing is if I said, No, don't take them
3 off that list and he says, No, don't take them off
4 that list, all the ones that you guys visited with
5 so far said, "No," now, are they going to come off
6 the list?

7 MR. SCOTT AIKIN: They may.

8 MS. PAM KILLS IN WATER: See. I mean, that's
9 why I'm saying it's really --

10 MR. SCOTT AIKIN: And it's not intended to be a
11 pass/fail or stop or go. It's intended to have a
12 discussion about what do sovereigns do with
13 management of the species. And right now, because
14 it's under, because it's on the list, the Federal
15 Government takes a prominent role in management of
16 that species. When we take that off the list, it
17 goes back to the tribes and the states to manage
18 that species. And then, like Mike said, if in your
19 scenario it gets down to a level that we think it
20 needs to go back on the list, then it can be
21 petitioned to be put back on the list.

22 MS. PAM KILLS IN WATER: But at that point who
23 petitions? The local state or the government -- I
24 mean, the tribal governments? Or who?

25 MR. SCOTT AIKIN: "Both/and." I think there's

1 both a mix of --

2 MR. MICHAEL THABAULT: Anybody can petition the
3 Fish & Wildlife Service to protect a species, a
4 tribe, a private citizen, an environmental group, a
5 governmental entity. If they believe it warrants
6 protection, federal protection, then anybody can
7 re-petition us to protect the species.

8 MS. PAM KILLS IN WATER: So let's go back to:
9 What year was these put on the list?

10 MR. MICHAEL THABAULT: It was originally
11 protected back in the late '70s.

12 MS. PAM KILLS IN WATER: And what was the
13 reasoning behind that?

14 MR. MICHAEL THABAULT: There were less than
15 136 Grizzly Bears in the Continental United States
16 at that time, and they were deemed to be threatened
17 to be driven into extinction in the Continental
18 United States -- there's still plenty of them in
19 Canada -- due to human persecution, basically
20 hunting, poaching, bears getting into garbage dumps
21 and getting into trouble in communities and really
22 creating conflict, and so bears were killed at a
23 pretty rapid pace because of them getting in trouble
24 and the lack of education of what bears and how
25 bears interact with people. And the lack of

1 understanding in how to manage yourself around bears
2 created a lot of conflict, and so we had a lot of
3 bear mortality, which was, at best, suppressing the
4 population. And if it was allowed to continue, we
5 probably wouldn't have Grizzly Bears in the United
6 States other than Alaska.

7 MS. PAM KILLS IN WATER: So what is the count
8 at right now?

9 MR. MICHAEL THABAULT: So we have bears in lots
10 of different places. So the greater Yellowstone
11 population is about 1,100 bears.

12 And then we have bears in what we call the
13 Northern Continental Divide. And I can show you a
14 map, too.

15 MR. MATT HOGAN: Maybe you should just jump in,
16 because I think a lot of Pam's questions --

17 If you're okay, Pam?

18 MS. PAM KILLS IN WATER: Yeah.

19 MR. MATT HOGAN: A lot of your questions are
20 really good, and I think they're answered in Mike's
21 presentation.

22 MS. PAM KILLS IN WATER: Okay.

23 MR. MATT HOGAN: And he can give you a benefit
24 of his visual aids, too, maps and stuff.

25 MS. NEDRA CHANDLER: Is that good?

1 MR. BRIAN SOUNDING SIDES: Uh-huh.

2 MS. PAM KILLS IN WATER: I'm sorry, I'm just so
3 used to being --

4 MR. MATT HOGAN: No, no, good questions.

5 MS. PAM KILLS IN WATER: -- real demanding of
6 what goes on.

7 MS. NEDRA CHANDLER: It's perfect, honestly.

8 MS. PAM KILLS IN WATER: It's really hard when
9 you come off of council and sit and try to be, you
10 know, below a council level, it's really hard to try
11 to --

12 MS. NEDRA CHANDLER: You're used to being an
13 elected --

14 MS. PAM KILLS IN WATER: Yeah.

15 MS. NEDRA CHANDLER: -- and asking for answers.

16 And I think it's really great to, if you are
17 getting your questions answered, too --

18 MR. BRIAN SOUNDING SIDES: Yep.

19 MS. NEDRA CHANDLER: -- just to clarify. You
20 know, you're clarifying, Why is this? And --

21 MR. SCOTT AIKIN: We're not petitioning for
22 support. That's not our drive. Our drive is to
23 express what we see biologically, and then our
24 mandate under the Endangered Species Act, which is
25 once that biology is met, then we need to promote

1 delisting. And then the tribes and the states who
2 will be responsible for that have a point to weigh
3 in on that.

4 MS. PAM KILLS IN WATER: Well, we were real
5 specific about when we were saying "Grizzly Bears."
6 And when I had asked him how much there was, he said
7 that this year there was a hundred and something.
8 And then I went to ask him what the count was now,
9 but then he switched it to no longer emphasizing
10 there's Grizzly Bears, he said, Well, we have this
11 amount in Yellowstone and then we have some bears
12 over here on this side and bears up this way. So
13 that tells me that these two other bears are
14 probably not Grizzly Bears maybe?

15 MR. MICHAEL THABAULT: They're all Grizzly.

16 MS. PAM KILLS IN WATER: They're all Grizzlies?
17 Okay.

18 MR. MICHAEL THABAULT: Everything I'm going to
19 talk about today is all Grizzly Bears.

20 So when the Grizzly Bear was originally
21 protected under the Endangered Species Act there was
22 136 in the entire Continental United States. And
23 the way it's protected is Grizzly Bears in the
24 Continental United States.

25 As we move forward from that point in time

1 we've tried to reintroduce and grow bear populations
2 in, throughout its range. So when I say we had 136,
3 now we've got populations of varying numbers of
4 Grizzly Bears in those locations where they used to
5 be and where we want to have them.

6 MS. PAM KILLS IN WATER: You don't think
7 they're coming back from Canada?

8 MR. MICHAEL THABAULT: We do have some coming
9 down from Canada. So when we -- I'm going to move
10 back and forth. I don't have a pointer.

11 So when we originally listed the species, this
12 is where we determined that bears could exist. So
13 we -- we said, There used to be bears in the greater
14 Yellowstone. And here's where we're talking about
15 today. We have about 1,100 bears in the greater
16 Yellowstone, Grizzly Bears.

17 In this population up here, which is what we
18 call the Northern Continental Divide, there's about
19 1,100 to 1,200 Grizzly Bears up there. And we do
20 have bears that come down from Canada into the
21 Northern Continental Divide.

22 This is the Cabinet-Yaak/Selkirks population.
23 There's about 80 to 100 bears in the Cabinet-Yaak
24 and Selkirks. And we do have bears that come down
25 from Canada to help that population now.

1 This is the Bitterroot. We do not have bears
2 in that area right now that we are -- that we know
3 of. We have had an occasional bear come from here
4 down to here, but they don't stick around.
5 Sometimes they go back. We've had them killed by
6 accident or on purpose.

7 And then the North Cascades population is up
8 here, and we're in the process of developing a
9 program to bring Grizzly Bears back to the North
10 Cascades in Washington. And there are bears that
11 move back and forth, a few bears, not very many. I
12 think we have in the "tens" of bears in the North
13 Cascades right now.

14 So, again, in this whole entire geography when
15 we first protected the bear in the late '70s, there
16 was only about 130 to 140 bears in all of that, and
17 now we have about 2,000 to 2,500 bears throughout
18 the range now in these areas, locations.

19 And you can see from here, you know, the
20 population back in the '70s, our 136 was right
21 there. And it's gradually been increasing over time
22 as we've done reintroduction efforts. We've had
23 public education. There's not been hunting.
24 There's not been some things that have basically
25 created what we call threats to keep the bear down

1 or maybe drive it into extinction in the Continental
2 United States.

3 So -- but the only thing we're talking about
4 today is going to be the bears right here in the
5 greater Yellowstone. Because we've been working for
6 30-plus years to get those to the point where
7 there's enough of them. And we think that there are
8 mechanisms, measures, state and tribal regulations
9 that can protect the bear in that ecosystem right
10 now. We're working in the others to get to the same
11 place, but we're not there yet.

12 So just, and Matt touched on this a little bit,
13 back in 2007 we also delisted, proposed to delist
14 and finalized a delisting taking the bear, the
15 Grizzly Bear in the greater Yellowstone off the
16 Federal Endangered Species List. And we were
17 successful at that for two years, and then it got
18 taken to court. We lost in court on a number of
19 fronts. But in the end the thing that the court
20 upheld was that we had not looked at Whitebark Pine,
21 which is a food source for the Grizzly Bears in the
22 greater Yellowstone area, close enough to determine
23 whether was the bear going to be able to survive if
24 Whitebark Pine Nuts -- they eat the nuts -- if the
25 Whitebark Pine went away in the greater Yellowstone

1 would the bear still survive?

2 And bears are pretty good at eating stuff.
3 They eat fish. They eat the cut moths. They eat
4 winter-kill elk. They eat bison. They eat
5 Cutthroat Trout and they eat Whitebark Pine. So
6 they eat a lot of stuff. They're omnivores, and
7 they'll go wherever they can get a food source.

8 We embarked on a study. And that's exactly
9 what this study indicated was that Whitebark Pine
10 Nuts were not really driving the Grizzly Bear
11 population. That really the bears had gotten to the
12 point in that greater Yellowstone that they were
13 controlling themselves, that food's availability was
14 not controlling themselves. And that they, in fact,
15 had recovered, that their population was stable.

16 Their population has been stable in the greater
17 Yellowstone since about 2002 at about the same
18 level, roughly -- you know, there's various counting
19 levels, and it can get pretty confusing, but they've
20 basically been stable from 2002 to the current time
21 frame. You know, they fluctuate a little bit here
22 and there, but basically they've been at the same
23 level.

24 MR. SCOTT AIKIN: And that level is, over on
25 the sign over there it describes it as being about

1 7- to 800?

2 MR. MICHAEL THABAULT: Yeah.

3 Again, there's a couple of different
4 methodologies. This method here that's on this
5 chart up here underestimates the total number of
6 bears by about 30 percent. So that says 700. If
7 you add 30 percent, there's about 1,000 to 1,100.
8 That's why I said there's a thousand. But that's
9 the standard method that we use to count bears over
10 there. And everything we're putting in our proposal
11 in terms of delisting the species is surrounding
12 keeping a stable population in the ecosystem in that
13 greater Yellowstone ecosystem.

14 MS. PAM KILLS IN WATER: So let's say -- let's
15 say you delist them, you get them delisted, now are
16 people going to start being able to get licenses to
17 kill them?

18 MR. MICHAEL THABAULT: So when we delist a
19 species like this, the management goes back to the
20 states and to tribal sovereigns that have management
21 authority over the species. So the states have
22 expressed an interest in potentially setting up a
23 hunting season for Grizzly Bears within the states
24 of Montana, Wyoming and Idaho.

25 And that would be -- there's a number of things

1 that result in bears being killed. There's vehicle
2 strikes. There's management controls because of
3 getting in trouble with garbage cans and campgrounds
4 and those sorts of things. There's obviously
5 poaching. There's still people that illegally kill
6 Grizzly Bears. In this circumstance there would be
7 an option for the states to develop a hunting season
8 within their jurisdictions.

9 MR. SCOTT AIKIN: And tribes, for that matter?

10 MR. MICHAEL THABAULT: And tribes.

11 MR. SCOTT AIKIN: For those tribes who choose
12 to do that, right? Okay.

13 MR. MICHAEL THABAULT: The Wind River
14 Reservation I believe has a Grizzly Bear management
15 plan that the Service has approved in the past, and
16 I believe we still believe it's a good plan. And so
17 as two tribes that have co-management authority
18 within the Wind River, if that was a tribal
19 decision, they could also proceed with hunting or
20 other management controls within the reservation.
21 The states would not have any authority on tribal
22 lands or within tribal management jurisdiction.

23 There is a bunch of -- the basics of this slide
24 is that the underlying thing that the Service needs
25 to look at is the science. Our obligation under the

1 statute is to look at, Does the best available
2 science tell us the species needs protection or
3 doesn't need protection? And that's where we're at
4 right now. We've looked at what's the bear doing;
5 how is its population; what might be controlling its
6 population, and do the -- does the management
7 program that both the states and the tribes have
8 presented to us, do we think that will continue to
9 maintain the Grizzly Bear in the greater Yellowstone
10 at a stable level for as far out as we can see?
11 Which oftentimes isn't very far, but we think that
12 what we have in front of us will keep Grizzly Bears
13 within the greater Yellowstone area for many, many
14 years to come.

15 So, again, here's our four areas. So in this
16 slide, there's a couple of different ways we can
17 treat species under the Endangered Species Act, but
18 the thing that we are proposing to take off the
19 Endangered Species List are all of the Grizzly Bears
20 that basically are in this circle. It's what we
21 call a distinct population segment. It's a way that
22 we can poll a population and look at it, and it's a
23 smaller chunk of the whole list.

24 The thing that's protected right now is the
25 Grizzly Bear throughout the Continental United

1 States, which means it's still protected in Florida
2 even though it never ever goes into Florida. And so
3 we're looking at where bears are and where they can
4 exist. And so the current proposal is to remove
5 protection from all the Grizzly Bears in that
6 circle.

7 This green part is where the vast majority of
8 Grizzly Bears in the Yellowstone ecosystem are
9 actually at. This is what we call the demographic
10 monitoring area. It's where we're going to count
11 bears. This is where we're going to count the live
12 ones and this is where we're going to count bears
13 that are killed. No matter what their source is,
14 whether it's a natural death, whether it's a
15 human-caused death, whether it's any other kind of
16 death, we're going to be counting that in the dark
17 green area.

18 You can see Yellowstone National Park is right
19 there. I think I have to put some things in
20 perspective. Again, the same, kind of the same,
21 this black line is the same as that green line.
22 This gray area right here is the current range of
23 bears. This is where they go right now. Here's the
24 Wind River Reservation and the two national -- three
25 national park areas. So the range of the bear,

1 where we're actually found bears recently is that
2 gray area. So we've actually -- we're actually
3 encompassing the vast majority of where the bears
4 actually are in the ecosystem on this proposal.

5 MR. SCOTT AIKIN: Brian, have you seen them out
6 there?

7 MR. BRIAN SOUNDING SIDES: No. I've seen
8 signs, but I've never actually seen one.

9 MS. PAM KILLS IN WATER: I've never seen one
10 traveling through there, staying there, camping
11 there. I've never seen the bears in that area.

12 MR. BRIAN SOUNDING SIDES: With the forestry,
13 I've seen a lot of bear signs, but no Grizzlies.

14 MR. MICHAEL THABAULT: My understanding is that
15 the bears on the reservation are in the single
16 digits. There's not very many there.

17 MR. BRIAN SOUNDING SIDES: Yeah. They're
18 mainly just like right where you've got them there
19 in the western corner.

20 MR. MATT HOGAN: There was a bear, though, that
21 I thought a couple years ago it got pretty close to
22 Lander, didn't it?

23 MR. MICHAEL THABAULT: Yeah.

24 MR. MATT HOGAN: But most of them I think stay
25 up in the winds far away from people.

1 MS. PAM KILLS IN WATER: That's not on that
2 map.

3 MR. MICHAEL THABAULT: Lander?

4 MS. PAM KILLS IN WATER: (Ms. Kills In Water
5 moves head up and down.)

6 MR. MICHAEL THABAULT: Yeah. So what I kind
7 of -- this is -- I kind of zoomed in to the --

8 MS. PAM KILLS IN WATER: When he said, "We
9 marked them all" --

10 MR. SCOTT AIKIN: There's Lander.

11 MR. MICHAEL THABAULT: Yeah.

12 MS. PAM KILLS IN WATER: That's way out.

13 MR. MICHAEL THABAULT: The second map is
14 actually a zoom-in of where we're at there, so...

15 MS. PAM KILLS IN WATER: It's way off to the
16 right.

17 MR. MATT HOGAN: And so we don't -- there might
18 be an occasional bear, Pam, that strays, but the map
19 that Mike showed the distribution is where we think
20 Grizzly Bears are, you know, not just where one may
21 have roamed out --

22 MR. MICHAEL THABAULT: Right.

23 MR. MATT HOGAN: -- and roamed back but where
24 we actually think they're there a good bit of the
25 time. So that's why Lander is not -- it's just a

1 little bit outside that circle -- or that polygon.

2 MR. MICHAEL THABAULT: And so the basis of the
3 proposal is: The way the Grizzly Bear population is
4 going to be stable is to control mortality. And
5 really the most precise way to control it is to
6 control female mortality. Females and female
7 mortality by far drives the population and what
8 happens to it. So if you kill a lot of females your
9 population is going to start declining.

10 So in the black line is where the most
11 stringent controls on mortality are going to be,
12 again that demographic monitoring. There will be
13 more flexibility outside the black line. Those are
14 getting closer to places like Cody and Lander. And
15 out on the west side in Idaho is Big Sheep Country.
16 Grizzly Bears can be kind of hard on sheep, and so
17 like other major predators, there are controls for
18 livestock and those sorts of things.

19 So those are all -- all of those forms of
20 mortality are all going to be incorporated into the
21 protection for the bear.

22 MR. SCOTT AIKIN: And is it fair to say that
23 the males are the ones that typically do the --

24 MR. MICHAEL THABAULT: Males will go farther.
25 When I showed you the map of the Bitterroot, the

1 bears that have showed up in the Bitterroot have
2 been males, 350-mile walkabouts, as opposed to
3 females will be 50, 60-mile.

4 MR. SCOTT AIKIN: Pretty skinny at the end of
5 that journey.

6 MR. MICHAEL THABAULT: Yeah.

7 There's three things that are the basis of
8 this, and they're back on the table if you're
9 interested in looking at them. The things that are
10 out for public review and out for tribal review
11 right now is the actual proposal to delist the bear
12 itself, as well as a revised recovery plan which
13 sets the biological targets that we think are
14 adequate, and a conservation strategy that is going
15 to be signed by the forest service, the park
16 service, the states.

17 I don't know if there's a tribal signature on
18 that from the Wind River tribes, Brian, or not. I
19 know they have been participating in some of the
20 subcommittees, and I know that they have discussed
21 tribal participation in monitoring, but I don't know
22 if there are going to be signatories to the
23 conservation strategy. I think we discussed that
24 last week was from your tribal perspective in
25 particular if there's a desire for the Northern

1 Arapaho to be signatories to that conservation
2 strategy, this would be the time to let us know that
3 so then we can get that into the mix for sure.

4 And the conservation strategy basically sets
5 the stage for how all of those entities will manage.
6 The states manage the bear and as well as the
7 tribes, and the federal agencies, the park service
8 and the forest service manage the habitat. So the
9 forest service and the park service are committing
10 to things like food storage orders and campgrounds
11 so, you know, you don't let your food out. There's
12 trash control, other forms of public education,
13 reducing roads. Because bears are very sensitive to
14 road densities in the forest, so they're managing
15 their forest practices and their forest management
16 to reduce the amount of roads and closing roads and
17 not building new roads. So those are all the things
18 that the federal agencies will be committing to in
19 terms of maintaining habitat.

20 MR. SCOTT AIKIN: There will be no hunting in
21 the national park, correct?

22 MR. MICHAEL THABAULT: There will be no hunting
23 in the national park, either Grand Teton or the,
24 Yellowstone. I'm not -- the -- John D. Rockefeller
25 is still a point of contention with the National

1 Park Service. I don't know what they're going to do
2 with that.

3 And we've encouraged the park service -- we've
4 encouraged the park service to coordinate with the
5 states, too, because there's a big sensitivity
6 around bears that move in and out of the park.

7 MS. NEDRA CHANDLER: Is this clarifying?

8 MR. BRIAN SOUNDING SIDES: Uh-huh.

9 MR. MICHAEL THABAULT: So, again, I kind of
10 touched on this that, you know, 75 to 80 percent of
11 the females are in that demographic monitoring, that
12 green area. And here's the agencies that will
13 participate in that conservation strategy.

14 And, again, the whole basis of whether a state
15 can hunt at all is dependent upon how much other
16 mortality is occurring. So, again, the population
17 can only sustain so much to be stable. And if that
18 level is met from other sources, like too many get
19 killed by poachers or too many get killed by
20 vehicular strikes or we have to have too many bears
21 taken out because of management control, that might
22 take the flexibility for hunting out of the picture
23 for a year or a number of years, depending on how
24 dramatic it is. So it's not that mortality is
25 unfettered. There's going to be controls. And so

1 if mortality is high in a given year from any
2 sources, that's going to limit that.

3 And there's protections to, if we exceed those
4 mortalities, the states are looking at taking that
5 extra that has occurred off of next year so that, or
6 that gets added to the next year so we don't
7 overshoot so we can continue to maintain that stable
8 population throughout the ecosystem.

9 Again, I've identified all of these -- all of
10 these sources. And these are all the things we're
11 going to be looking at in that green demographic
12 monitoring area. All of these things are going to
13 be tracked in order to make sure we keep that stable
14 population that's been in place in the ecosystem
15 since 2002. That's what we're shooting for is, you
16 know, we were stable in 2007 when we did this the
17 first time. It's continued to remain stable to
18 slightly increasing since then, and we want to
19 continue that into what we call the foreseeable
20 future. It's kind of a wonky term, but as far out
21 as we think we can see reasonably that that
22 population will remain stable. So that's what we're
23 trying to achieve.

24 And so that -- that's that 674. That
25 translates to the numbers that are on that little

1 chart down below there.

2 There's about 700 by this count. This
3 estimation method, there's about 700 there now.
4 There was 684 in 2007. So, again, that's that --
5 you know, it goes up and down. But it's basically
6 been around that 680 to 670 to 700 range for the
7 last 14 to 15 years.

8 MR. MATT HOGAN: And maybe, Mike, I'll just
9 jump in for a second.

10 MR. MICHAEL THABAULT: Uh-huh.

11 MR. MATT HOGAN: So Mike talked about it
12 earlier. There's kind of two numbers that have been
13 out there. So there's two population estimators.
14 The one that we've historically used -- when I say
15 "we," it's the, all the folks who are part of the
16 management, not just the Fish & Wildlife Service,
17 have used a population estimator that we know is
18 conservative. And it estimates the population based
19 on: They fly aerial transects, and they look for
20 females with cubs. And they have a rule set that
21 says if they see a female with cubs here and then
22 they pick up another one within, it's like 30 or 40
23 kilometers, they don't count it for fear that it
24 could be the same bear. So that's why we think it's
25 pretty conservative.

1 There's a new population estimator that they
2 think does a better job of getting the actual
3 numbers of bears in the ecosystem, but we've
4 purposely decided, made a conscious effort to use
5 the older population estimator for two reasons.
6 One, we've got the long-term trend data that we
7 think that population estimator is better at
8 determining the long-term trend. Because, as Mike
9 said, we want to keep the population stable. The
10 other reason is it's conservative. And we would
11 rather -- and, again, when I say "we," it's the
12 totality of the groups managing bears, including
13 tribes and states and the federal agencies. We want
14 to be conservative and make sure we don't do
15 something ill-advised. So that's why we're sticking
16 with the older counting methodology even though
17 we're pretty confident that the new methodology is
18 more accurate in terms of the number of bears. So
19 everything will be based off of the lower number,
20 which means, by definition, the mortality limits
21 will be less than they would have been if we used
22 the other estimator, if that makes sense.

23 MS. PAM KILLS IN WATER: Yep.

24 MR. MICHAEL THABAULT: And so maybe to one of
25 your earlier questions, Pam, you know, about what

1 happens if something goes awry, these are some of
2 the triggers that we're looking at. If the
3 population gets too low, the Service has placed upon
4 itself the ability to reevaluate the species without
5 getting a petition.

6 The states are -- we've made it pretty clear in
7 our proposal that the states need to come up with
8 regulations that can be in their wildlife game and
9 fish codes to protect the bear. And those are
10 things like if this mortality limit is met, they'll
11 stop hunting. If the -- they'll have reporting.
12 There's certain -- you can't hunt a female; you
13 can't hunt females with cubs, that's going to be a
14 prohibition. You might get a cub by accident, so
15 we've kind of incorporated that, but you're not
16 hunting cubs either but you may still have mortality
17 on cubs.

18 And so we have several triggers in the proposal
19 that would allow us to revisit protecting the bear
20 if the management that we've identified doesn't meet
21 the intended goals. And nothing is final right now
22 because the states have not finished their
23 regulations. And we will not finalize a rule to
24 take it finally off the Federal Endangered Species
25 List until the states develop their regulations.

1 My understanding right now is that the Wind
2 River Tribes have no intention of having a hunting
3 season. And we've already said that their
4 management plan is adequate from the Fish & Wildlife
5 Service's perspective.

6 So we're looking for the states to come forward
7 with their rules and regulations for how they'll
8 implement all of this stuff.

9 That's it, my 12 or 13 slides, the Grizzly Bear
10 and the Endangered Species Act in 30 minutes or
11 less.

12 So that's where we're at again. We're in a
13 proposal stage. The public comment period ends in
14 five days.

15 We have had a number of tribal governments that
16 have expressed opposition to the delisting because
17 of the hunting issue with the states.

18 The tribal interests are not confined to the
19 public comment period. We have a special
20 relationship through our tribal trust
21 responsibilities, and we will be open to and
22 conversing with tribes and receiving tribal input
23 throughout the process.

24 And so that's kind of where we're at. And I
25 would venture to say that the purpose of this

1 meeting is for us to share with you all an
2 understanding of what our obligations and
3 jurisdictions are and get a sense from the tribal
4 representatives present, you know, to get clarity on
5 that, understand where your tribal interests are
6 coming from so that we know that. And certainly if
7 we had support for a delisting, that would be great.
8 But if there's not support, then what is the nature
9 of that lack of support and is there something that
10 we can do? And in some circumstances there may not
11 be anything we can do about the core issue just
12 because of how the Endangered Species Act is built.
13 So that's where we're at.

14 MS. PAM KILLS IN WATER: So May 10th is the
15 last day to have --

16 MR. MICHAEL THABAULT: For public comment.

17 MR. MATT HOGAN: Yeah. Not for tribes.

18 MR. MICHAEL THABAULT: If the tribes, the
19 tribal governments want to submit us something after
20 that, we will accept those comments. Some tribes
21 have submitted to us resolutions already on this
22 issue. So we would accept tribal input after
23 May 10th.

24 MS. PAM KILLS IN WATER: Who would we send that
25 to?

1 MR. MICHAEL THABAULT: That would come to us in
2 Denver. There's also -- there's a couple of
3 different methods, but the best way would be just to
4 send it to us. And we can leave our contact
5 information here. It's also on the proposed rule.

6 MS. ANNA MUNOZ: I'll give you my card.

7 MS. PAM KILLS IN WATER: Okay.

8 MS. ANNA MUNOZ: Because we also have, and I
9 think it would have been in maybe that e-mail that
10 you -- well, I don't know. I don't know if it was
11 in the e-mail from Nedra that you probably received
12 recently. But in previous e-mails that we've sent,
13 we've had a link to a -- we have two Grizzly Bear
14 sites on our website that has all of this
15 information, not the Power Point but like the
16 proposed rule, the conservation strategy, the
17 recovery plan, all of the information that Mike has
18 spoken about.

19 So we have one on a Grizzly Bear page for our
20 region. And then we also have a tribal Grizzly Bear
21 page for our region that also includes information
22 that we've sent out to tribes previously, all of the
23 letters that we've sent out to tribes.

24 And so I would be happy to provide both of
25 you -- if you've signed in, I'll have your e-mails.

1 I can send you those links and provide you with that
2 information.

3 And then in those letters it does say that you
4 can send your comments to Ivy Allen who's the Native
5 American liaison, but realistically you can send
6 them to me, send them to Mike. You can -- you know.
7 But I'll give you my business card, and you can feel
8 free to always contact me at any point in regards to
9 submitting comments, you know, submitting questions,
10 anything like that.

11 MS. PAM KILLS IN WATER: Okay. Yeah, I don't
12 see it in the e-mail.

13 MS. ANNA MUNOZ: Yeah, we -- this was probably
14 something we sent out in March when we first
15 proposed this. But I can get you that information.

16 MS. PAM KILLS IN WATER: Okay.

17 Um, I guess I'm pretty much done with knowing
18 what I need to know. But I guess what do we need --
19 or, I'm back to: What do we need to do?

20 MR. SCOTT AIKIN: So the information is to
21 present to the President as his representative, but
22 it's not a mandate for you to do anything. If you
23 choose to, you can submit comment.

24 MS. PAM KILLS IN WATER: Okay.

25 MR. SCOTT AIKIN: But there's not a positive

1 requirement for you to do anything, other than
2 certainly have discussion about this and get clear
3 on what our intent is.

4 MS. NEDRA CHANDLER: So you feel like there's
5 clarity about those two pieces about how and how it
6 fits?

7 MS. PAM KILLS IN WATER: Yeah.

8 MS. NEDRA CHANDLER: Because that was really
9 what -- last week, too, those two questions. And I
10 think people left. It took longer last week,
11 though, to sort of get to that.

12 What about you? Do you feel like you've got
13 things you want to explore in this conversation
14 today still?

15 MR. BRIAN SOUNDING SIDES: Not really, no.
16 It's all pretty much basic sense, you know.

17 MS. PAM KILLS IN WATER: I've asked all of his
18 questions.

19 MR. MATT HOGAN: Brian, if I could ask you a
20 question. And I hope it's not offensive. And if it
21 is, please just say, That's really something that I
22 don't want to talk about.

23 So when we were meeting last week, Conrad
24 Fisher who's with the Northern Cheyenne, council
25 member, he talked a little bit to the spiritual

1 connection that Native Americans, different tribes
2 have to the bear. And he was very articulate and
3 said basically that it's very hard to articulate.
4 It's very hard to explain, particularly in English,
5 how we relate to bears. But if you were so inclined
6 and you felt like you could do it in English that
7 would make sense, I would love to understand.

8 I know, Pam, from your perspective you said you
9 don't, you know, have a lot of firsthand knowledge
10 either from your family or from your tribe about the
11 connection of the Rosebud Sioux with the Grizzly.

12 But clearly the Northern Arapaho continue to
13 live with Grizzly Bears. So if you'd be inclined,
14 I'd love to hear that. If you'd rather not, I
15 completely understand that as well.

16 MR. BRIAN SOUNDING SIDES: Well, I'd rather
17 not.

18 MR. MATT HOGAN: Okay.

19 MS. PAM KILLS IN WATER: Well, I guess for
20 us -- I don't know about, if their tribe has the
21 same story, but ours is like: You look at Devil's
22 Tower and that's where they say these different --
23 well, like in -- the way I was told was they were
24 warriors. Everybody must have been hunting at the
25 same time or something, but they're from different

1 tribes. And these four warriors were running from a
2 bear.

3 And, anyway, they -- there was -- it was flat.
4 There was no place to go. Before that becomes a big
5 old mountain it's somewhere where they end up
6 staying or, you know, they got together hugging and
7 they're all praying that, you know, that somebody
8 would come and help them because this bear wouldn't
9 leave them alone.

10 And, um, anyway, the mountain started rising,
11 and so all those marks that are on the side of the
12 mountain there, or whatever it is, that's the bear
13 clawing. He's trying to get at those warriors that
14 are up there. That's why they say that's a unique
15 rock because they were up there and that bear was
16 trying to get them and that's why it has all of
17 those claw marks all the way.

18 MR. MATT HOGAN: Well, thanks. Yeah, I've
19 heard that before, too. That's -- I appreciate
20 that.

21 MS. PAM KILLS IN WATER: Yeah, so -- and I do
22 know that the bear is part of our culture. But,
23 like I said, for me, myself, I'm not familiar with
24 it because maybe I didn't ask about it or, you know,
25 that -- just like we say our language in our, on our

1 tribe is, it's kind of fading. And we're trying to
2 rebuild that. And in rebuilding that, I'm learning
3 all of this stuff.

4 So one of the things that I've also heard about
5 the bear is he was the medicine, I don't know how
6 you call it, the medicine man, the medicine carrier.
7 He's the one that could dig up the roots, and he
8 knew which roots to dig up to help people with.

9 MR. SCOTT AIKIN: You watch that. Yeah, you
10 learn from what the bear does. You can get so much
11 knowledge from that.

12 MR. MATT HOGAN: Thank you.

13 MS. PAM KILLS IN WATER: It's kind of -- I know
14 it needs to be protected. But that's why I'm saying
15 just listening and knowing what exactly I need to go
16 back and tell my tribe what they need to do, you
17 know, whether they oppose it or whether they're with
18 it, that's what -- I need to let them make that
19 decision. And -- but I know that there's going to
20 be a few tribal elders that will probably say they'd
21 be opposed to it. But I just need to know.

22 And I'm going to be honest with them, as I am
23 with you. Many things that tribes want, even though
24 the government says, "It's a government to
25 government; we're going to include you," it's more

1 or less just a show. It doesn't -- I mean, like he
2 said, even if we said we're opposed to it, the
3 government can go ahead and say, Just go ahead and
4 delist them. And we'll be -- it'll be like another
5 frustration for us. But we have to -- as long as we
6 got to say something.

7 MR. SCOTT AIKIN: And to that extent, I mean,
8 that's the sovereign status that the country has in
9 international relations, too.

10 MS. PAM KILLS IN WATER: Yeah.

11 MR. SCOTT AIKIN: We see that with the climate
12 change stuff, countries that say no and countries
13 that say yes.

14 So in that bigger picture of bringing that down
15 to this scenario, what you bring forward to us is
16 something that we don't have. And it doesn't mean
17 that we can't change and adapt to what's being
18 brought forward, but without us knowing what that
19 is -- that's the intent of government to government
20 is to communicate, Hey, this is an issue for us.
21 Here's why it's an issue. And then we have to
22 communicate, Here's the limitations that we have.
23 Like Mike was saying, the Endangered Species Act has
24 only so much they can do, and then it goes outside.
25 And then the tribe has that to take back to Congress

1 and say, These are limitations that we want to have
2 regressed. I mean, that's the bigger picture of
3 that.

4 So when I work in D.C., I work for the
5 director, and that's oftentimes what we will have is
6 tribal leaders who come in to express, "Okay, we
7 understand the limitation, but we need to go to the
8 delegation of the state and talk to them about how
9 we want that changed." And our information then
10 becomes very important for you to take as ammunition
11 in some ways to say, Here's what the issue is.

12 MS. PAM KILLS IN WATER: I guess --

13 Let's go off the record on this.

14 (Discussion off the record.)

15 MS. NEDRA CHANDLER: So in terms of next steps
16 from this meeting, I understand that -- who will
17 share the transcript and then the list of everybody
18 who's here so that you have a way to call and e-mail
19 each other?

20 MS. ANNA MUNOZ: I will do that.

21 So please make sure that you've signed in with
22 your e-mail address. And if you have any questions,
23 I went and grabbed a card. And you can always
24 contact me.

25 But I will commit to sending the transcript

1 when we get it. It might be a couple of weeks. I
2 will send a copy of the sign-in sheet so everybody
3 will know who was here today. I will send you the
4 links that I referred to on our website for our
5 Grizzly Bear page, as well as our tribal Grizzly
6 Bear page. And just note that even with our tribal
7 Grizzly Bear page, we have a larger sort of tribal
8 interest page where we post things related to our
9 tribal relationship.

10 And then if at any point you have questions or
11 comments on this, you can submit them to me. And
12 you'll have my e-mail address, both from the card
13 and then the e-mail I'm going to send you.

14 And then I will also commit to just say: In
15 the future if you hear of something that we are
16 working on or that the Service is doing and you feel
17 like you need to make contact with somebody in the
18 Fish & Wildlife Service, you can always feel free to
19 contact me.

20 MS. PAM KILLS IN WATER: Let's say I go back
21 and I give my tribe this information and it's
22 relayed on but they want to do the whole 13 slides
23 and they want to talk with you guys, have the
24 questions I have even though I've explained it to
25 them. Many tribes have, you know, they -- tribal

1 officials would rather have the people there
2 themselves. Do I contact you for that?

3 Or do I get ahold of you for that?

4 MR. MICHAEL THABAULT: Either one. Either Anna
5 or --

6 MS. ANNA MUNOZ: I can be your point of
7 contact, and then I can loop in anybody else that
8 needs to be looped in.

9 MS. PAM KILLS IN WATER: Can I just have you
10 e-mail me your Power Point?

11 MR. MICHAEL THABAULT: Uh-huh.

12 MS. PAM KILLS IN WATER: And I'll stand there
13 with my pointer and say, See this Grizzly right
14 here?

15 (Laughter)

16 MS. PAM KILLS IN WATER: No.

17 MS. ANNA MUNOZ: Well, and some of the things,
18 too, that we've done in the past is we've held
19 Webinars where we've presented similar
20 presentations. I mean, we want to be responsive to,
21 you know, your requests. But we have, again,
22 multiple options that we could explore.

23 MS. PAM KILLS IN WATER: Okay. Sounds good.

24 MS. NEDRA CHANDLER: What's the best way to
25 end? Is there -- I know we had a really beautiful

1 closing prayer last week. Do we want to --

2 MS. ANNA MUNOZ: I guess I would like to just
3 make sure and just verify that everybody has
4 everything that they came for before we actually
5 end, if Pam has any additional questions.

6 Or, Brian, if you have any other additional
7 comments?

8 MR. BRIAN SOUNDING SIDES: No.

9 MS. ANNA MUNOZ: Okay.

10 MS. PAM KILLS IN WATER: No, I don't think I
11 have any. I'm just not feeling it right now.

12 MR. MICHAEL THABAULT: That's okay. We can
13 fill in the gaps if you get back ahold of us.

14 MS. PAM KILLS IN WATER: Okay.

15 MS. NEDRA CHANDLER: That was a big thing that
16 people wanted last week, too, in Bozeman, was just
17 each others' contact information. Several people
18 said, "One thing I want is to be able to have the
19 right phone numbers for the Fish & Wildlife Service
20 and for each other."

21 Well, I want to honor you for the honest
22 conversation that you had and just staying really
23 open. You know how you can tell when people are not
24 just going through the motions. And for the travel,
25 it's not easy to travel these distances.

1 MR. SCOTT AIKIN: Take some of that food.

2 MS. ANNA MUNOZ: Definitely take some of the
3 food, please.

4 MR. MICHAEL THABAULT: Leave one for me,
5 though. I haven't had lunch.

6 MS. NEDRA CHANDLER: And, Cindy, thank you for
7 your service. It was really, really great.

8 I don't have a prayer.

9 But, Scott, do you usually close with one in
10 your culture?

11 MR. SCOTT AIKIN: Not necessarily, no.

12 MS. NEDRA CHANDLER: Okay.

13 MR. SCOTT AIKIN: Because people have to go at
14 times, and so...

15 MS. NEDRA CHANDLER: Good. All right.

16 MR. MICHAEL THABAULT: Thank you.

17 MR. MATT HOGAN: Thanks.

18 MS. PAM KILLS IN WATER: Thank you.

19 MR. MICHAEL THABAULT: You're welcome.

20 MR. BRIAN SOUNDING SIDES: Thanks, everybody.

21 MS. NEDRA CHANDLER: Safe travels.

22 * * * * *

23 (End of proceedings at 1:07 p.m.)
24
25

1 STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA)
2) ss.
3 COUNTY OF PENNINGTON)
4

5 I, CINDY K. PFINGSTON, hereby certify that
6 the foregoing pages numbered from 1 to 51, inclusive,
7 constitute a full, true and accurate record of the
8 proceedings had in the above matter, all done to the best
9 of my skill and ability.

10 DATED this 24th day of May, 2016.
11

12 _____
13
14 CINDY K. PFINGSTON
15 Registered Professional Reporter
16

17 My commission expires:
18 February 4, 2022
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25

FWS Emails 015143

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